

# Monitoreo y Evaluación

## Capacity Development Module Final Technical Report



Executed by:



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## Table of contents

<b>1) General Information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
a) Main Objective.....	3
b) Secondary objectives .....	3
c) Participants.....	3
d) Overview of the main activities and products.....	3
<b>2) Activities and products .....</b>	<b>4</b>
a. Diagnosis and SWOT analysis .....	4
b. M&E good practices and state of art .....	4
c. Face to face workshop .....	4
d. Virtual Training .....	5
e. Mentoring process .....	8
f. Digital Manual .....	8
<b>3) Individual results .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4) Organizational results.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5) Lesson learned and final reflections.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>6) Any recommendations to TTI? .....</b>	<b>14</b>

## 1) General Information

### a) Main Objective

- To strengthen Monitoring & Evaluation systems (M&E) and methodologies in ILAIPP's centers.

### b) Secondary objectives

- a. To conduct a diagnosis of the participating centers to determine their M&E status.
- b. To determine a capacity building program based on the diagnosis results.
- c. To carry out a research that includes successful experiences of participatory M&E.
- d. To provide a virtual training module that helps centers to strengthen their M&E systems.

### c) Participants

- a. Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo, GRADE – Perú
- b. Fundación para el Avance de las Reformas y Oportunidades, Grupo FARO – Ecuador
- c. Foro Social de Deuda Externa y Desarrollo de Honduras, FOSDEH – Honduras
- d. La Fundación Dr. Guillermo Manuel Ungo, FUNDAUNGO – El Salvador
- e. La Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social, FUSADES – El Salvador
- f. Fundación ARU – Bolivia
- g. Investigación para el Desarrollo ID- Paraguay<sup>1</sup>

### d) Overview of the main activities and products

- A diagnosis of the centers participating in the process.
  - A survey to determine the status and needs of each of the centers.
  - A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities y Threats (SWOT) analysis<sup>1</sup>.
- Monitoring and Evaluation digital manual
  - One research focused on the importance of M&E in think tanks.
  - Analysis and systematization of six M&E practices and systems.
  - A systematization of the M&E capacity building process.
  - Two additional case studies of organizations that participated in the M&E capacity building process.
- One face to face workshop to present M&E tools and methodologies and determine the main subjects to be addressed in the virtual capacity building module.
- Four virtual capacity building modules, which focused on the following subjects:
  - Introduction to M&E and governance mechanisms.

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<sup>1</sup> Included in the M&E digital book.

- Qualitative and quantitative indicators and mixed methods
- Performance evaluation.
- Digital and non-digital tools for M&E.

## **2) Activities and products**

This report contemplates all the activities developed in the M&E module. It is important to clarify that due to institutional and staff changes in Grupo FARO, a delayed was produces in the M&E module's execution, for which activities were suspended for several months, resuming on April 2018.

### **a. Diagnosis and SWOT analysis**

For this module to be successful and useful, it was necessary to get a better approach of the status and needs ILAIPPs centers had regarding their M&E systems. With this aim, a survey was designed to gather information and establish the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats each of the organizations faced. The results obtained in this process helped us to determine the face to face agenda (including the tools and mechanisms that were exposed) and the themes of the virtual training process.

### **b. M&E good practices and state of art**

As part of the capacity building process, the need to identify and systematize successful M&E experiences in think tanks was clear.

Once the SWOT was defined for each one of the centers, we identified the need to gather successful experiences that served as models to strengthen internal M&E process and mechanisms. We had to adjust this objective because of the lack of information regarding monitoring and evaluation in think tanks. Instead of gathering successful experiences, we carried out six case studies which included at least one of the following characteristics: diversity; strategic planning and intervention; impact; and cooperation mechanisms. The results were systematized and included in the M&E digital book. Three ILAIPP organizations participated in this process: Grupo FARO, CIPPEC, ASIES; and two international organizations: World Vision Ecuador and Rand Corporation.

### **c. Face to face workshop**

A face-to-face workshop was held in Panama between September 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The main objectives of this meeting were: a) to present participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies and tools, through the presentation of case studies; b) to determine specific organizational changes to shape the contents of the virtual training process. Eight think tanks participated in the workshop: Grupo FARO, ASIES, CIPPEC, ARU, ID, FUSADES, GRADE and FOSDEH. The participants rated this workshop as excellent.

#### **d. Virtual Training**

To accomplish several objectives established for this module, a virtual training course to strengthen capacities and revise new tools was dictated through Grupo FARO's virtual learning platform: e-faro. The beginning of the virtual training was delayed from its original date because of several changes, both, in Grupo FARO and in the think tanks. There was an important staff rotation and some difficulties to find adequate tutors for the different subjects that were supposed to be reviewed in the training module. Because of this delay, FARO communicated with each of the think tanks to reconfirm or modify the organizational changes they originally proposed for the capacity building process. The course was structured by four capacity building modules each dictated by an expert in the topic. Additional individual mentoring sessions were dictated by these experts.

##### **a) Capacity Building Modules**

The four capacity building modules included relevant literature, theoretical documents that explain the main contents with more detail, as well as useful tools to strengthen the organizations. The main topics to be developed in the course were established through an initial diagnosis developed in the Phase I, during Panama's workshop. However, the particular contents were strongly linked to the specific knowledge of Grupo FARO's and ASIES' staff working on M&E related themes. Thereupon the internal institutional changes in FARO, some modifications were produced in the modules; however, themes and topics proposed by the participant centers were included in the course. Instead of developing two different modules regarding governance and the construction of the system, the first module: *"Introduction and governance"* gave an overall review regarding the M&E system, as well as initial tools and mechanisms in how to design, construct and implement participatory M&E Systems.

The following modules were focused on specific tools. Module two encompassed qualitative and quantitative indicators; the third module focused on performance evaluation tools and mechanisms and the fourth module proposed some specific tools and software useful for M&E Systems. Experts for modules one to three were easily identified. However, it was an important challenge to find an expert or organization with enough know-how and time availability to address module 4: "Software and tools for M&E". More details are given under module 4 section.

#### **I) Content**

The capacity building modules for M&E were:

##### **a. Introduction and governance**

- i. Constructing an integral M&E system with a participatory perspective.
- ii. Designing M&E System.
- iii. Implementing the M&E System with institutional participatory perspective.
- iv. Step to Step Institutional M&E System Plans.

**Tutor:** Humberto Salazar.

**Main objectives:**

1. Based on a critical reflection, identify opportunities to improve institutional monitoring systems.
2. Aligned with the identified opportunities, generate change strategies that strengthen the M&E Systems.
3. Structure an initial M&E Institutional Plan or reinforce an existing one considering: i) actions for the construction of shared vision, common language and training; ii) actions to identify management processes: strategy, communication, documentation control, knowledge management, monitoring, program and strategy evaluation, customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.

**Additional Information:** As part of this module, an initial diagnosis was implemented. This diagnose measured three types of variables: i) degree of development of the organization's monitoring systems at various levels: strategic, program and process management; ii) degree of specific knowledge about the topics to be addressed in the module; and iii) general training interests.

The results of this diagnosis are complementary to previous diagnoses made within the framework of the M&E module.

**b. Qualitative and quantitative indicators and mixed methods.**

- i. The importance of indicators for measuring.
- ii. Qualitative Indicators: definition, characteristics.
- iii. Quantitative Indicators: definition, characteristics.
- iv. Mixed methods.

**Tutors:** Andrea Villarreal y Pablo Vidueira

**Main objectives:**

1. Based on the M&E Institutional Plan formed on module 1, clarify the importance of indicators for monitoring and evaluating programs and project.
2. Provide clear definitions and tools to differentiate qualitative and quantitative indicators and their main characteristic.
3. Establish when and how to use the different kind of indicators in order to obtain better performance and results.
4. Explain what are the mixed methods and who are they used.

**c. Performance Evaluation.**

- i. Institutional performance and its strategic character.
- ii. Performance Evaluation: Characteristics and dimensions.
- iii. Tools used for Performance Evaluation.

**Tutor:** María de los Ángeles Vaca

**Main objectives:**

1. Define performance evaluation and determine how it is applied at institutional level.
2. Provide tools to determine the process that allows to line up the organization's mission, vision and main activities. This, to better understand the organization's integral performance.
3. Furnish tools that allow to measure and evaluate the organization's performance.

#### **d. Tools and software for the M&E systems**

The initial topics proposed for this module were:

- i. Traditional tools for M&E.
- ii. Common software for M&E Systems.

Initially, Azai Consultores, a Colombian organization with extensive knowledge and know-how in this subject was contacted to implement this module. Azaí presented a first proposal for content development, which was accepted by Grupo FARO, as it aligned with the think tanks needs. Even though contractual terms were previously discussed and agreed upon, when the contract was sent for signature, Azaí did not agree on the terms and refused to develop the contents. This decision was communicated with short notice, which left us with no experts to develop the fourth module; however, we contacted several of our allies. The little availability of time to get to know the centers and develop the contents ended up with many refusals. Because of this, we decided that Humberto Salazar, who dictated the first module and accompanied the centers throughout the capacity building process, to address this module and develop the contents. This decision relied on the fact that Humberto has a long experience in M&E, knew several tools, was acquainted with the think tanks and familiar with their specific needs.

## **II) Structure**

Each of the modules specified in section I) were divided into three or four units, depending on the tutor's requirements. Each module was structured in the following way:

- a) Initial evaluation.
- b) Video presenting the tutor/s.
- c) Introductory webinar.
- d) Unit 1.
- e) Unit 2.
- f) Mentoring session
- g) Unit 3.
- h) Unit 4 (when applicable).
- i) Mentoring Session
- j) Final evaluation.

- k) Final working paper.
- l) Satisfaction Survey

At the same time, each unit was structured as follows: a) theoretical document; b) mandatory literature review; c) support material (papers, videos, etc.); and e) evaluation.

#### **e. Mentoring process**

A mentoring process was carried along the virtual training module, this in order to achieve the institutional goals set for the course, translate theoretical knowledge to empirical experience and assure that tools and information are used to fortify capacities. The mentoring sessions dig deeper into the particularities, capacities and previous work and knowledge of each center. The mentoring sessions were executed as follows:

##### I) Specialized mentoring in each training module

The tutors of each module provided specialized mentoring to the participating centers, focused on the institutional objectives set for the course and the Institutional Work Plan they had set in the course's framework. Each tutor helped the participants to better understand the tools and contents dictated in the module and to establish the best strategies to incorporate them into their Work Plan. This in order to achieve their goals and strengthen the organization. Two virtual training sessions were carried out from modules 1 to 3, with a length between 45 minutes and 1 hour each. Due to changes in module 4 and the short time we had for its execution, mentoring sessions were provided just when required. Additional mentoring was provided by the tutors via e-mail when required. Furthermore, tutors gave specific mentoring in the development of each module final working paper. They provided specific advice and help the centers to focus their effort in activities that are going to be useful for the centers in a long term.

##### II) Follow-up mentoring sessions

The follow-up mentoring session helped monitor the centers, their work and how were they integrating the specific tools and knowledge provided in each module into their Working Plan and their effort to achieve institutional goals. For this, module's 1 tutor, who helped establish the Institutional Work Plan for the course, tracks progress and provide additional advice in how to better incorporate and use tools. This mentoring sessions had two components: a) at least one virtual meeting between modules; and b) fluid communication and mentoring via e-mail. The follow-up sessions allowed the participant centers to have a constant mentoring along the course, and work more deeply into achieving their goals.

#### **f. Digital Manual**

A Monitoring and Evaluation digital manual was elaborated as one of the tools that systematizes the M&E module, its processes and its results. The aim of the manual is to reflect on M&E, synthetize some tools and systematize the M&E module, all this to provide a useful tool for other think tanks interested in strengthening their capacities regarding this subject. The results of the



initial diagnosis and SWOT analysis, the M&E good practices, the literature review and state of art, the face to face workshop and the virtual training are included in this document. Two additional cases were studied and systematized, both belong to think tanks that participated in this formation process and that ended up showing the best results and achievement of organizational changes: GRADE and Fundaungo. This manual is being edited in this moments is going to be published in Grupo FARO's web page the first week of May.

### 3) Individual results

After the workshop carried out in Panama, a survey was conducted to know the individual results of the participants:

- They know best practices from other think tanks
- They realized the importance of participatory evaluation
- They know how to move from a traditional monitoring and evaluation system to a participatory one
- They know the experiences of the other centers about M&E systems
- The 90% of the participants considered that the workshop was useful
- The 50% of the centers indicated that the relevance of the workshop for their centers was very good and the other 50% rated as good

This section will report on the average results obtained throughout the four training modules To measure individual results, we will reviews the following indicators: I) knowledge increment (scores obtained in the module's tests); II) perceptions of quality and relevance of the module's content and tools; III) overall satisfaction level with the module's execution and activities, and IV) general participation levels.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Test's average<sup>2</sup> /5</b>	<b>Initial Evaluation /10</b>	<b>Final Evaluation /10</b>	<b>Increased points</b>
ARU <sup>3</sup>	3,75	4	7	3
FOSDEH	3,25	5	8,25	3,25
Fundaungo	4	4	8,25	4,25
GRADE	4	5	8,50	3,5
Grupo FARO	4	5	7	2
ID <sup>4</sup>	1	4	n/a	n/a

<sup>2</sup> In takes into account all the module's evaluations.

<sup>3</sup> ARU participated and completed the activities just on module one. The displayed results contemplate its participation only in this module.

<sup>4</sup> ID only completed the initial evaluation and the first two units of module 1. After this, they asked to be disassociated from the module due to internal agenda issues. The displayed results contemplate its participation only in this module.

### I) Knowledge increment

Regarding this indicator, the initial goal was to achieve a 20% increase in knowledge in each of the modules. The initial evaluation's average is 4,5/10 and the final evaluation's average is 7.8/10. This shows that scores increased on 3.3 points during the module. This growth shows that at least a 20% knowledge augmentation was achieved by all the participants. The initial goal was achieved and surpassed.

### II) Quality, relevance and overall satisfaction

To measure the participants perceptions regarding the quality and relevance of the contents dictated on the module, a final satisfaction survey was executed. Individual results cannot be displayed, as the surveys were conducted in an anonymous ways, so the participants can freely qualify the contents and give their opinions. The score corresponding to satisfaction, is an average of all the other scores. The results are displayed in the following table:

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Rate /5</b>
Overall satisfaction	3,9/5
Quality: contents and activities	3,5/5
Relevance: contents and activities	4/5
Usefulness: contents and activities	4,5/5
General learning levels	4,5/5
Tutor's performance <sup>5</sup>	4/5
Logistics	3/5
Practical contribution of the module for the organization's projects.	4/5
New tolos/knowledge for the organization's M&E work.	4/5

The survey's results indicate a high satisfaction about this module, in general terms.

### III) General participation

Participation and access to contents and tools has been established as another indicator to monitor individual results. The scores set in the following table are the results of the general participation in the different activities of the four modules. A total of 49 activities were proposed throughout the module, and a score of 1 point was assigned to each one of them. The activities are: diagnose fulfilment, Initial evaluation, short exercises, short tests, final evaluations, participation in mentoring sessions and accomplishment of the final working paper, final monitoring discussion.

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<sup>5</sup>Understood as: knowledge, commitment and skills to communicate.

The average participation score is 41/49, which shows that increase participation levels is still one of the most important challenges in the course.

<b>Organization<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>General Participation /49</b>
FOSDEH	35
Fundaungo	42
FUSADES	35
GRADE	44
Grupo FARO	36

#### **4) Organizational results**

This project seeks to contribute to change the internal practices and the evaluation culture of the organizations. Having comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems will allow the centers to have orderly and relevant information for their respective environments. With this purpose, it is important that each of the centers establishes their institutional objectives for the capacity building virtual course. Even though objectives had been set in a previous encounter between the participants, due to the changes in the module's execution and the proposed contents, a reevaluation process was established. In this process, the participant centers established more specific goals in the framework of the course and the proposed activities. As mentioned above, the main objective of this virtual capacity training is to provide the participants tools and knowledge to strengthen their organizations, by rethinking, updating and improving their M&E Systems. In this section, we will establish the institutional objectives and how each module is contributing to achieve it.

##### **I) Institutional Objectives**

The following table shows the participant organization's main goals for this course. It is important to clarify that each module will provide relevant tools to allow the organization achieve their goals, but in addition to this an internal and individual work needs to be performed. Tutors will support this work and the process to achieve the goals.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Institutional Objectives</b>
ARU	Improve the organization's current M&E System by strengthening the general knowledge about the M & E systems.
GRADE	Create a monitoring and evaluation tool that allows measuring different dimensions of interest of the courses, training activities and other educational activities carried out by GRADE.
Grupo FARO	Acquire tools and knowledge to strengthen the organization's M & E systems.

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<sup>6</sup> We included only the think tanks that participated in all the modules.

FOSDEH	Update the M & E systems and develop tools focused on scope and impact evaluation.
Fundaungo	Formulate an M&E mechanism that allows to measure the work and progress of the organization's programs and identify and generate tools to strengthen this mechanism.
FUSADES	Strengthen the M&E System through mechanisms that facilitate tracking progress and presenting results. Use these inputs to generate a proper planning for the organization.

Most organizations expect to acquire tools and knowledge that will allow them to update, change or fortify their M&E Systems.

## II) Monitoring mechanisms

The initial agreed indicators to monitor advances regarding institutional goals are<sup>7</sup>:

- a) Carry out bimonthly follow-up meeting between the tutors and coordinators (Grupo FARO and ASIES), in order to determine activities and schedules.
- b) Apply a participatory M&E System between the participants, tutors and coordinators, as well as the beneficiaries of the centers to determine the progress of the center in the following dimensions: people, projects, organizations.
- c) Carry out interviews with the actor involves in the process in order to collect experiences and insight information about the implementation.

Regarding literal *a*), follow – up meetings are carried weekly with the tutors, as a close coordination between them and the course's coordinator is essential to provide the centers the tools and information they have previously required. Initial planning of each module is worked jointly between the tutor of each module and the coordinator. All documents and activities proposed by the tutors are reviewed by the coordinator to assure their quality and pertinence for the centers. In addition, follow-up meeting with the long term mentor are carried out at least twice a month to review the centers' performance.

Concerning literal *b*), difficulties to measure the indicator have been identified. Thus, we propose to synthesize how each module is contributing to achieve the proposed goals, by identifying the specific work carried out in the mentoring sessions and the tools that have been most useful for the centers.

For literal *c*), even though we could carry out interviews with the different actors involved in the process, this would represent a duplication of activities, as the role of the long term tutor, besides providing additional help and mentoring, is to collect information, experiences and suggestions to improve the performance and quality of the course. In addition to this, the coordinator is present

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<sup>7</sup> These indicators had been established in the M&E Monitoring Plan for the M&E activities.

in all the virtual mentoring sessions and sets aside the first five minutes to follow-up activities and collect suggestions to improve the course, activities and contents.

The degree in which these changes were accomplished are displayed in the following table:

<b>Organization<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Organizational change compliance</b>
FOSDEH	45%
Fundaungo	75%
FUSADES	65
GRADE	45%
Grupo FARO	40%

This was measured through the participation of the think tanks in the activities of the four modules and thanks to a final survey to evaluate all the M&E course. In some case, such as GRADE and FOSDEH, the institutional changes did not rely only in this course, but on the think tanks' structures and willingness to innovate their M&E systems.

## **5) Lesson learned and final reflections**

- In a process of capacity building, the collaboration and commitment of the participants is important. The monitoring and evaluation module requires the interest not only of the person who represents the organization but also of those who have the responsibility for decision-making and leadership. It is a commitment to move to a culture of evaluation, self-criticism and self-reflection, which allows the joint learning.
- One of the challenges is the virtual communication among the organizing groups. Being in three different countries, the coordination of agenda and technical problems always generate problems and delays.
- Another challenge was the lack of timeliness of participants. Failure to comply with commitments on time, this is still a challenge that is somehow remedied through constant reminders
- Most organizations are comfortable with the current management of their M&E System. The main difficulties they experience today can be solved by small changes in their planning activities. However, the growing demand for integrated M&E systems will motivate the organization to adopt them as central elements in their internal management.
- Collective webinars, as communication mechanisms, have not been attractive for the participating centers. However, individual mentoring sessions have been very welcomed, having an active participation of all the organizations. These personalized sessions allow each center to reflect and work in specific important subjects for the organizations.

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<sup>8</sup> We included only the think tanks that participated in all the modules.

- Maintaining a constant and active participation of all the organizations is one of the virtual courses' main challenge. An active communication with the tutors and the individual mentoring sessions have allowed us to face this challenge.
- It is important that the virtual training and the mentoring sessions are focused on action plans and viable and concrete activities for the organization, so that the process is effective. For this reason, a re-evaluation process of the participating organization's main objectives was generated and each module proposes mechanisms and tools that allow the centers to work towards the fulfillment of these goals.
- Another challenge has been to generate functional virtual communication channels with organizations based in Central America. The proposed platforms for virtual communication have generated connection problems, making it difficult for individual mentoring. In these cases, written exchanges based on questions to the tutors, and comments from them in relation to the changes and actions proposed by the centers, have worked better.
- It is difficult to generate both organizational and individual interest in the module (we have sought advice from experts conducting online training and one thing that we have not figured out is how to solve problems with commitment of participants, this is usually pre-solved in paid training modules as participants make an investment that they commit to. Since ILAIPP modules are not paid it is difficult to generate such a commitment).
- Having the support of a consultant with connections in the think tank world has facilitated getting a response from think tanks when reaching them out to systematize the best practices and tools.
- Understanding the expectations and needs of think tanks and participants and the projects they are implementing or plan to implement is key to design the virtual training modules and contents. Although we have diagnosis documents that informed tutors when designing their modules, a more intensive effort could help to design contents that are more engaging. It is also key to design training to allow different starting points (this is feasible when the trainer covers general content and provides literature and resources for optional review depending on the interest and knowledge of each participant).
- It is essential that tutors plan a dynamic module that combines videos, readings, activities, webinars, one-to-one conversations.
- One-to-one sessions with tutors/mentors provide an opportunity for rich interactions and learning and solve the problem of participation (they are set according the agenda of the two parties). Although overall participation has not increased significantly between Module 1 and Module 3 (from 53% to 62%) we have seen a stronger commitment to participate in one-to-one sessions as they are planned according to participants' availability).

## **6) Any recommendations to TTI?**

Interest in upgrading or strengthening projects focused on M&E should not come only from the participants of the course. Institutional support and interest are essential to make changes and adjustments in M&E related themes. We encourage TTI to raise awareness of the importance of

collaborative work and openness in the organizations to M&E related issues. Additionally, from the experience of this module and previous capacity building efforts promoted by TTI we would recommend that future efforts are designed to combine: in-person meetings, virtual training sessions, one-to-one mentoring and competitive funds. Perhaps adding an in-person meeting to this module would have increased the interest and commitment of participants at the individual level and provided a space for the construction of a community among them that would promote future collaborations. At present, each participant knows a little bit about the others but they have not built strong relationships among them. Additionally, it is important to establish better monitoring mechanisms, that allow to adjust the process to the specific need that arise from think tanks. These mechanisms should also serve to analyse the degree in which the capacity building modules are generating long term know-how, capacities and tools in the think tanks.